

## GET RID OF THE PEST OF SUMMER SAFELY

## PERSONAL PEST CONTROL

MOSQUITOES: Screens on windows and storm doors help keep out mosquitoes. Use colored "bug lights," which have a tendency to not attract adult mosquitoes and other pests. Remove containers with standing water, which easily become breeding sites (for example, baby pools, bird baths, tires, pots, etc.) Mowing lawns to three inches in height prevents areas where mosquitoes can harbor and also has the added benefit of conserving on lawn watering needs. Repair loose or torn door and window screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering your house.

Other mosquito prevention measures include personal protection, which is critical since Colorado is entering its third year of West Nile virus in the state

- Minimize exposed skin surfaces by wearing a hat or head net, long trousers, long-sleeved shirts and light colored clothing. Dark colors tend to attract mosquitoes. Avoid wearing perfume or cologne when outdoors, which can also attract mosquitoes.
- Avoid being out-of-doors at dawn and dusk when mosquito activity is at its highest.
- For people that want additional protection, insect repellents with DEET are recommended. Be careful applying repellent to children under 12 years old. For young children, only apply repellent that contains 10 percent or less DEET. Avoid spraying or applying DEET to their hands and mouth area.

ANTS: Seal cracks and crevices and remove any moisture. Spilled food items (including pet food and trash) should be cleaned up immediately. Keep food not being used in containers with tight fitting lids.

Homemade ant remedy: A half-and-half mixture of white vinegar and water is effective in controlling ants. Spray outdoor areas to prevent them coming into the home.

**BEES AND WASPS:** Keep screens on windows and doors, remove small wasp nests; and have bee swarms removed by a beekeeper to keep bees and wasps at bay.

MICE: Eliminate openings to the buildings that are greater than 1/4-inch. Snap traps and sticky glue boards may be used to capture mice if an infestation is found. Clean up spilled food products immediately or at least daily. Remove bags, boxes and other potential areas mice can nest from food storage areas. Keep food in closed containers.

BIRDS: Keep unscreened windows or other openings closed when not in use. Birds can be discouraged from nesting where they cannot be tolerated such as near windows and

doors. Birds tend to use the same nesting areas year after year, which will indicate those sites where exclusion by using screening or nets is encouraged since nest removal is very labor-intensive and may result in the accidental removal of bird eggs, which can violate federal law.

## **VEGETATION PEST CONTROL**

Even though many weeds found in the housing areas, cantonment area and down range look like exotic flowers, they are predators among native plant life by competing for water, nutrients and sun. Here are a few effective, natural weed control methods:

MOWING AND HAND PULLING: Mowing grass to maintain a uniform height controls some broadleaf weeds by preventing flower and seed formation. Some weeds, however, have the ability to adapt to mowing by flowering just above the surface of the ground and below the height of most commercial mowers.

Maintaining healthy turf grass also helps control weeds. Proper fertilization and watering of grassy areas promotes healthy turf grass that can fend off weed growth.

"GREEN" PESTICIDE PRODUCTS: There are a variety of products that are nontoxic, yet effective in the treatment of weeds and vegetation pests. Some are soap based. To find these nonchemical controls for weeds and pests, check local plant nurseries and hardware stores. Or try one of these homemade control recipes:

INSECT CONTROL RECIPE: The following is a recipe to rid plants of "unwelcome guests" such as aphids, slugs, cut worms, etc.: Place one package of chewing tobacco in a one-gallon glass jar, fill it with water and let it stand for three-to-four days. Preferably, set the jar in an area where sun will heat the mixture. The water will turn a muddy-brown color. In a spray bottle (one quart) pour in a capful of dishwashing detergent, one cup of the tobacco mixture and fill the rest of the bottle with water. Spray on plants infested with insects or on the ground where they are seen. Mist the area to be treated with water prior to application.

WEED CONTROL RECIPE: A general purpose, homemade weed remedy involves items already in most kitchens. Mix together one of gallon water, one quart vinegar and one pound salt. Use mixture in a spray bottle and spray only onto undesirable weeds since it is harmful to all plant life.